

Statement on House of Representatives Action on the “Conservation and Reinvestment Act”

May 11, 2000

I am very pleased by the overwhelming bipartisan vote in the House today to provide significant new resources to meet America’s critical conservation and recreation needs. Today’s vote on H.R. 701, the “Conservation and Reinvestment Act,” is a historic step toward achieving permanent conservation funding—a goal embodied in the lands legacy initiative I put forward in my budget this year. I applaud Chairman Young, Representative Miller, and others for their leadership on this effort.

We will continue working with Congress to secure protected and permanent conservation funding within the framework of a balanced budget that provides for critical budget and fiscal priorities, and with no burdensome or unnecessary restrictions on Federal authorities that have proven so effective in preserving America’s natural heritage. I urge the Senate to move swiftly on this legislation. I am confident that working together we can create a permanent conservation endowment that will be a true gift to future generations.

Statement on the Situation in Sierra Leone

May 11, 2000

U.N. Secretary-General Annan and I agreed this morning that the international community must intensify international efforts to restore peace in Sierra Leone and to prevent a return to all-out civil war. The situation there has been grave. But the U.N. is determined to fulfill its mission; African and other nations are willing to act; and we are ready to help them.

I have instructed our military to provide needed assistance to accelerate the deployment of troops to UNAMSIL and informed the U.N. that the United States will help transport reinforcements. A U.S. military transport aircraft is now in Jordan to move ammunition and supplies that are needed im-

mediately for the Jordanian elements in Sierra Leone.

We intend to support the commitment west African nations have made to send additional troops to Sierra Leone to restore peace. A U.S. military team is now in Nigeria to determine what assistance might be needed from the international community to outfit and transport these forces as quickly as possible.

I welcome the statement west African leaders made on Tuesday at their emergency summit in Abuja, Nigeria, calling for the release of all hostages and pledging to protect democratic institutions in Sierra Leone.

I have asked Rev. Jesse Jackson, my Special Envoy for Democracy in Africa, to return to the region to work with leaders there for a peaceful resolution of this crisis. Reverend Jackson has been actively involved in our diplomatic effort to help the people of Sierra Leone realize their peaceful aspirations.

Proclamation 7307—Peace Officers Memorial Day and Police Week, 2000

May 11, 2000

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

From our earliest days as a Nation, America has been blessed with citizens of courage and character who have dedicated their lives to keeping the peace in our communities. Five years after the creation of the U.S. Marshals Service in 1789, U.S. Marshal Robert Forsyth was shot and killed in the line of duty. He was the first of more than 14,000 law enforcement personnel since that time to give his life to uphold the law and protect the people he was sworn to serve.

Our Nation owes a lasting debt of gratitude to the men and women of our law enforcement community who, each day, put their lives at risk to protect us and ensure the safety of our families and homes. Because of their skill, valor, and commitment, we have begun to turn the tide on crime in America. The murder rate is at its lowest level in more than 30 years, and the overall crime rate is at its lowest point in 25 years. There are

many reasons for this progress, but police chiefs, policymakers, and citizens alike agree that the dedication of our law enforcement officers and the spread of community policing have been critical factors. Today, in cities and communities across America, residents and police officers are working in partnership, forming neighborhood watch organizations, banding together against drug dealers and gangs, and building connections that are the core of community life and the foundation of a civil society.

Unfortunately, we need look no further than the tragic losses suffered by law enforcement officers to recognize the risks that these brave men and women face every day. Last year, 50 police officers were struck down in the line of duty, and another 84 lost their lives in accidents. For these heroes, the safety of their fellow citizens was their purpose and passion, and they made the ultimate sacrifice to fulfill their duty.

We can never repay these gallant men and women for their service or adequately comfort their families. We can only honor their memory—not only in words and ceremony, but in our determination to promote justice, uphold the law, and preserve the peace and safety they helped purchase with their lives.

By a joint resolution approved October 1, 1962 (76 Stat. 676), the Congress has authorized and requested the President to designate May 15 of each year as “Peace Officers Memorial Day” and the week in which it falls as “Police Week,” and, by Public Law 103–322 (36 U.S.C. 136), has directed that the flag be flown at half-staff on Peace Officers Memorial Day.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim May 15, 2000, as Peace Officers Memorial Day and May 14 through May 20, 2000, as Police Week. I call upon the people of the United States to observe these occasions with appropriate ceremonies, programs, and activities. I also request the Governors of the United States and of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, as well as the appropriate officials of all units of government, to direct that the flag of the United States be flown at half-staff on Peace Officers Memorial Day on all buildings, grounds, and naval vessels throughout the United States

and all areas under its jurisdiction and control. I also invite all Americans to display the flag at half-staff from their homes on that day.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this eleventh day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fourth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 11:05 a.m., May 12, 2000]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on May 15.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Chemical and Biological Weapons Defense

May 11, 2000

Dear _____:

Attached is a report to the Congress on Chemical and Biological Weapons Defense, submitted pursuant to Condition 11(F) of the resolution of advice and consent to ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, adopted by the United States Senate on April 24, 1997.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives; John W. Warner, chairman, and Carl Levin, ranking member, Senate Committee on Armed Services; Jesse Helms, chairman, and Joseph R. Biden, Jr., ranking member, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; Ted Stevens, chairman, and Robert C. Byrd, ranking member, Senate Committee on Appropriations; Benjamin A. Gilman, chairman, and Sam Gejdenson, ranking member, House Committee on International Relations; C.W. Bill Young, chairman, and David R. Obey, ranking member, House Committee on Appropriations; Floyd Spence, chairman, and Ike Skelton, ranking member, House Committee on Armed Services.